One of the most important questions we can help our children answer is, “Where does our food come from?” Perhaps the best tool to help us explore this topic is a garden. Due to rising popularity, we have more and more knowledge about what works. Here are some tips to help make your garden adventure a success.

**Form a Team**
- Don’t do this alone; get a team together that might include staff, parents, kids, etc.
- Designate someone as the garden coordinator to keep things moving forward.
  This position can rotate among team members.

**Plan Your Garden**
- Dream! Explore your location—think about parking lots, roof tops, lawns, and classrooms. Remember, you can grow food anywhere!
- Draw pictures; come up with a master plan. If you are planning a major garden, you may want to get a professional landscape architect or permaculture designer to help you with this process. Your local Cooperative Extension office can help with free workshops and materials.
- Build a budget. Consider contacting local businesses to ask how they might support your garden—they may be excited to provide supplies or cash. Or search the web for grant opportunities (e.g., www.kidsgardening.org).
- If your budget is small, start small, maybe with just a few container gardens. Never lose sight of the big picture, but you have to start somewhere!
- Things you will absolutely want to have are:
  - Good soil (get it tested if you are going to grow in the ground).
  - At least six hours of sunlight.
  - A water source.
  - A tool shed.
- Plan for summer maintenance! Schedule team members and/or recruit others like parents, teachers, and student volunteers for different maintenance tasks. Make friends with a farmer to consult with as problems arise.

**Enjoy Your Garden!**
- Use your harvested food. Use it for snacks, send it home with children, or donate to pantries.
- Incorporate activities that are integrated into the program day (e.g., let kids pull weeds during outdoor time.)
- Above all else, have fun!